



Planning a Camping Trip on Santa Cruz Island

If you are planning to camp on Santa Cruz Island and would like to kayak one day, we ask that you make your own reservations for camping and ferry transport. Once you have made those arrangements, we can help with the guided kayaking portion of your trip.

Campsite Reservation - [Book your campsite at recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov)

You will want to stay at the Santa Cruz Scorpion campground located on Santa Cruz Island (part of Channel Islands National Park). The campground has an Upper Loop and Lower Loop. All the group sites are in the Upper Loop (it's a longer hike to reach this area). Print out your confirmation and take it with you on your trip.

Ferry Boat Reservation – [Book your camper ferry ticket at islandpackers.com](https://www.islandpackers.com)

If you are kayaking the first day, please make sure you are on the same departure time as our other guests.

Kayaking Tour Reservation - [Book your kayak tour at sbadventureco.com](https://www.sbadventureco.com)

Once you have made your camping and ferry reservations call our office to book the kayaking portion of your trip. Please book these reservations as far in advance as possible as there is limited space for camping, ferry boat seats, and kayaking tours.

When you book your tour online, there will be a question that asks if you'd like to add ferry tickets to your booking. You can just skip to the checkout page since you will have secured your own tickets already. On the checkout screen, there will be an area where you can enter your ferry details (date and time for both arrival and departure), as well as your campsite # in case of an emergency.

When it comes to meet-up time on the day of your tour, you would meet us on the island rather than prior to ferry departure as you would for a day trip. Our Adventure Village is about a 5-10min walk from the pier where the ferry drops you off, back towards the campground. You will actually pass right by it as you make your way to your campsite. There is a large sign with Channel Islands Adventure Company on it. You'll meet there at the scheduled tour start time. No need to arrive early. There is a map on the island to help guide you if needed, and you can have a look at it [here](#) as well. That map also has a list and descriptions of the hiking options on the island, so it's a really useful guide.

PARKING: Parking Regulations for Ventura Harbor Village

All overnight visitors will need to acquire a Parking Pass at check-in and park in the long-term parking. There are no fees for parking. Additionally, there are parallel parking spaces on Spinnaker Drive for day-trip passengers ONLY. If you park your car in one of these spaces overnight, you will be ticketed.

SEA SICKNESS

How to avoid seasickness

- 1) **Rest.** Get plenty of rest prior to starting your travel plans. A body that is well-rested is better able to handle the stressors associated with traveling.
- 2) **Stability.** Avoid sitting inside in the galley; choose a seat on the upper deck.
- 3) **Sit.** Do not stand. Standing will have your body in a constant state of trying to maintain balance.
- 4) **Focus.** Keep your eyes focused on the horizon or on a stationary object that is off in the distance.
- 5) **Don't read.** Reading will have your eyes moving and stimulating signals that can trigger a sudden onset of motion sickness.
- 6) **Don't travel on a full or empty stomach.** If you start to feel ill, eat some crackers and a carbonated beverage to settle your stomach.
- 7) **Hydrate.** Dehydration while traveling can aggravate motion sickness. Drink plenty of water.
- 8) **Dramamine or Bonine.** Take over-the-counter medication for motion sickness or an over-the-counter antihistamine. Especially if you are a person that knows they are susceptible to motion sickness. These medications can make you drowsy or cause other side effects so use them with caution.

CAMPGROUND: Scorpion Ranch Campground is ½ mile from the dock. The hike to the campground is along a flat, dirt trail and takes approximately 10 minutes. Visitors must carry all gear to the campgrounds. A cart will be provided by SBACo to assist in your transportation of gear. See the section on cart use and packing, below.

Camping conditions are primitive, and users must camp within designated areas. All campgrounds are equipped with picnic tables and pit toilets. Potable water is available at Scorpion Ranch Campground. No trash containers are provided; campers must pack out their own trash. No fires are permitted. To prevent scavenging animals from entering your site, please store all food in the food boxes provided.

PACKING: Island Packers has limitations on size, weight, and types of gear that can be transported because of the difficulty of transferring it ashore and the limited storage space available on board the vessels. *Please be aware that Island Packers will not transport items that weigh more than 45 pounds.* Cargo space is limited, so please try to limit the number of 45lb bags you bring to equal to or less than the number of nights you will be staying on the Island. **All camping gear must arrive 1 HOUR prior to departure time.** Nothing should be hanging from backpacks. **All trash must be packed off the Island and no fires are allowed.** **Do not pack fuel or flammable liquid containers in baggage,** as it must be stored in a separate location on the boat during travel for safety reasons.

Island Packers will NOT transport the following:

- Cardboard boxes
- Carts, dollies, or wagons
- Items stored in paper or plastic bags
- Water containers over 3 gallons
- Loose gear
- Outboard motors or rubber rafts
- More than two scuba tanks per person
- Glass containers

**As with all types of travel, transportation times and days may have to be altered due to inclement weather and/or sea conditions. Since there are no provisions on the islands it is suggested you pack a small amount of extra provisions should you need to use them.*

Suggested Packing List: This list is just a recommendation. Please bring whatever you feel you need to be comfortable while camping.

Boat Ride – You will be traveling to the island via boat. Weather can be clear to windy or overcast all on the same day, so please dress in layers.

Kayaking Clothing and Gear – We will happily provide paddle jackets, and wetsuits if desired. We will also provide life jackets and helmets for kayaking.

- Bathing suit
- Board shorts or water shorts
- Synthetic layers (Tevas, keens, Chacos, etc.) are strongly encouraged. Please no flip-flops. Old tennis shoes work just fine, as long as you have another pair to wear for hiking. Bring a shoe that can stay on your foot as you walk in the surf or on rocky beaches.
- Brimmed hat or cap
- Towel
- Waterproof sunscreen - SPF 30 or higher
- 1-quart (or greater) water bottle with water
- Sunglasses with a neck strap such as “Chums” or “Croakies” - Your glasses may get lost without a neck strap.
- Waterproof camera (optional)
- Seasickness medication or any other necessary medications

Cell Phones - Reception is spotty or non-existent on the crossing and at the Island. Turn your phone off when not in use or the battery will die from trying to make a connection. Although we offer dry bags to help keep gear dry while kayaking, everything that comes on the kayaking trip runs the risk of getting wet. We, therefore, recommend that you only bring personal gear that can get wet or damp during the kayak portion of the trip. Items that must stay dry, such as cameras or other electronic devices, change of clothes, or personal effects should stay in your backpack or at home.

Clothing for Camping – Bring Multiple Layers. Weather can vary greatly on the Island, from moist and foggy to sunny and windy. Be prepared for varying temperatures.

- Hiking boots or tennis shoes
- Windbreaker
- Jacket
- Fleece
- Beanie
- Hat
- Sleeping bag and pad pillow
- Gloves
- Shorts
- Long-sleeved shirt
- Short-sleeved shirt
- Thermal shirt and pants
- Camp stove
- Synthetic or wool socks
- Refillable water bottles
- Day pack
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Camp kitchen

Camping Gear

- Sleeping bag and pad pillow
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Camp stove
- Camp kitchen

We do not offer rentals for camping gear, however, there are several options you may consider:

- [UCSB Adventure Programs](#) - Located near Santa Barbara
- [Lower Gear](#) - Can ship to Island Packers Ferry Company
- [A16 Outfitters](#) - Pickup in West LA - limited range of gear (no cooking gear)
- [Last Minute Gear](#) - Can ship from the Bay area - \$300 + shipping

Tips For Meal Planning On The Channel Islands

Because the time available for you to explore the Island is precious and limited, don't let it be consumed by chores. To make the most of your time, it is recommended you minimize campsite food preparation to the greatest degree possible by doing everything you can in your kitchen ahead of time (washing, chopping, sautéing, cooking), and bringing your entrées to the Island in as near a state of completion as possible; saving you the headache of lots of messy pans and utensils, garbage, and lost time.

DINNER – Some meals lend themselves well to pre-prep and camping conditions: soups, stews, chili, pasta, and sauce. Choose dishes that don't scorch easily. **Barbecuing and open fires are not allowed and all trash must be packed out with you.** There are no trash cans on the Island.

LUNCH – Prepared sandwiches and wraps.

BREAKFAST – If you can, avoid the time-intensive breakfasts. Opt instead for oatmeal, cereals, bagels, muffins, and fruit.